

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph appearing at page 29, line 5 to line 23, as follows:

There are valuable benefits associated with utilizing the high vinyl polydiene rubbers made with the initiator systems of this invention in tire tread compounds. These benefits include excellent traction characteristics, low hysteresis and better functionalization efficiency. The high vinyl polydiene rubber will have at least 50 percent repeat units that are of vinyl microstructure based upon the total number of polydiene repeat units in the rubbery polymer. The high vinyl polybutadiene rubber has a weight average molecular weight of at least 300,000, wherein said high vinyl polybutadiene rubber has a monomodal polydispersity of at least 1.2, and a ratio of radius of gyration to weight average molecular weight of greater than 0.078 nm<sup>2</sup>/kg, wherein the radius of gyration is determined at the weight average molecular weight by multi angle laser light scattering and wherein the weight average molecular weight is determined by multi angle laser light scattering. The high vinyl polydiene rubber will typically have a monomodal polydispersity of at least 1.3.